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VICTORY

CHARLES KEELER

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THE VICTORY

POEMS OF TRIUMPH

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POEMS OF TRIUMPH

BY

CHARLES KEELER

NEW YORK
LAURENCE J. GOMME
1916

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no. 1

To
JOHN BURROUGHS

We have climbed together the granite peaks tossed up in the West,
We have talked together of life and death and the spirit quest.
Friend of the hills and the birds and flowers with heart undefiled,
Your beard is frosted by time, but you look with the eyes of a child;
Your own has come to you as you stand on the peak of age,
And I call up from the valley and ask for thy blessing, O Sage!

NOTE

INCLUDED in this collection are two poems which were published in earlier volumes, burned with all my other published books in the San Francisco earthquake and fire. The lines here entitled "Growth" were first printed under another caption in "A Light Through the Storm," and "The Dreamer and the Doer" is from "Idyls of El Dorado."

The lines "To My Boy" were published in *The University of California Magazine;* "Faith and Works" appeared in *The Cosmopolitan Magazine;* "A Masque of the City" was first printed in *Success Magazine;* "Playing the Part" in *The Pacific Monthly.* "Compensation" was included in a volume of verse published by The California Writers Club. "On the Dedication of a Drinking Fountain" was read in Alameda, California, before the fountain and printed in the local papers. "A New Year Ode" was read at a public gathering and printed in the *Berkeley Reporter.* "Love is All'" appeared in *Bruno's Weekly* under the title "A Song of Life." Most of the above have been many times reprinted in various papers, but are now for the first time gathered in a volume.

Of the remaining poems, a large number have been recited on my programs in California, Honolulu, Japan, China, the Philippines, India, Florence, London and New York, but have not hitherto been published.

C. K.

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THE VICTORY

THE VICTORY

IN the night of defeat I await the dawn of victory,
From the clash of discord I flee to harmonious song,
From the anguish of evil I yearn to the triumph of good:

The conquest of age by the dauntless heart of youth,
The conquest of death by the power creative of soul,
The conquest of hate by the limitless might of love.

O WHENCE, O WHITHER, SOUL?

O WHENCE,
O whither,
Soul?
What genesis,
What destiny
Is thine?
Back of thy birth,
Beyond thy death,
What fate?
Ephemeron
With tremulous flight
From chrysalis
One fluttering hour
Unto oblivion!

Millenniums of life
Through thee reverberate;
Uncounted cycles swing
Through thy pre-natal pulse;
Unreckoned æons cast
Thy seed from life to life.
Fate plays at cards with thee,
Shuffles and cuts the pack
Through ages ere thy birth,

And throws thee on the board
The last hand of the game.

Thy garments wrought
Of dust of stars,
Primordial nebulæ
On time's loom spun
To plasmic form,
Become thee well!
O lovely bride,
Thy mighty spouse,
The world-czar Death
Awaiteth thee.
Hail to thy nuptials!
But whither the journey
Out unto the heavens,
Star-wandering pilgrim?

The footfalls of angels
Up cloudy steeps guide thee;
The path of the comet,
Celestial highway
To ultimate star-worlds,
Thy bright feet shall traverse.
No bonds shall enthrall thee,
No limits shall bind thee,
For lo 'tis ordained
Thou shalt journey to God!

THE REAL

WE vex our lives with aimless strife,
We clutter up our days with things;
We strain for goods, we grasp for gain,
And lo we find 'tis all but dust,
'Tis but illusion mocking us.
What are these phantasms of today
For which we toil and moil in pain,
These prized belongings of an hour
Wherefore we fritter life away?
Ashes and rust, the winds of care
Whirl dancing down the void of time,
Or smoke to just obscure the blue,
Or sick miasmas of the morn.

Give me the real, give me the true;
'Tis not compounded out of clay,
The spirit essence, love distilled,
God's presence growing into light
Through soul of flower up to man,
Friendship and love, benignant peace,
And beauty hallowing all our hours.
Yea that alone we bring to life
When from the mother's womb we spring,
And that which in our hearts we hold

As silently we drift away
From this great pageant of the world,
And lift our gaze to wider spheres —
That only can beguile our tears.

THE CRY OF LIFE

I AM no flagellant
With whip and scourge,
I am no penitent
In hairy coat;
No faster, no ascetic I,
No mortifier of the flesh,
No monk in lonely cell
Emmewed aloof from life.
Thank God, who did endow
Me, soul, with flesh and frame
To glorify, to use
In joy and thankfulness!

'Tis good to live, to breathe
Deep draughts of fragrant morn,
Deep dewy draughts of night;
To eat sweet simples of the earth,
To drink of springs, cool, crystal-clear;
To feel the warm benignant sun
Tingling the skin, the zest of winds,
The nip of frost upon the cheek;
To feel the tender touch of hands —
Communicable thrills awaked
By their caress, the throb of life

That leaps with meeting lips,
The ecstasy of love —
O life, O bliss!

So is my cry not death
But life! more life, replete
With all that sense can wring
Of beauty out of clay;
Full of the joy of light,
Of color and of sound,
Of redolence of flowers,
Full of sweet words and laughter,
Until intoxicate
With beauty we may see
The hem of the onspeeding Deity
And cry out, God, praise be to Thee!

MAN THE CONQUEROR

ONE by one hast thou conquered the elements, masterful man,
Taming the steam and electrical spark to thy will,
To speed thee o'er land and o'er sea at thy beck and thy nod;
Boring like mole through the mountains and under the rivers,
Diving like penguin beneath the wild waters and rising
To ride on the waves unconcerned by thy triumphs surpassing.
Now thou hast mastered the air, and thy ships go careering
Skyward to vie with the eagle, by danger undaunted.

What is there left for thy conquest, unsatisfied monarch?
What but thyself, Cosmic Cæsar, who owns none for master!
Of old it was said, "Know thyself," but I say to thee further,
"Go, conquer thyself"—that will make thee commander-in-chief,
With armies of passions rebellious subdued and submissive,

A monarch 'twill make thee, with hopes and with fears
for thy subjects;
Nay, 'twill make thee a god, and the world will be
thine where thou walkest.

THE DREAMER AND THE DOER

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."— ST. JOHN.

BACK of every mighty action stands the planner
with his plan;
First the dreamer, then the doer; first the Maker, then
the man.
Shall we lower rate achievements of the brain than of
the hand?
All we do is of the spirit if we rightly understand.

When the voice of Science tells us how through ages
man has grown,
How the world is still in making, how the past is all
our own,
Shall we therefore count it lightly that the world was
first a word
Spoken in a void of silence, by the startled atoms
heard?

For the world is still unfolding what the primal Mas-
ter planned,
Through eternity completing one sublimely thought
command;

And the dreamer is the doer if he dreameth aught
aright,
For his thought shall grow to action, and his word
shall be the light.

FAITH AND WORKS

WE prate of love and deal in hate;
We talk of faith and trust to fate.
O might we do the things we preach,
Could we but live the life we teach!

When Christ was born, did men rejoice?
Adown the ages swells his voice,
But sounds in vain for him who reads
If faith leads not to loving deeds.

When Plato lit the torch of yore
The beacon blazed from shore to shore,
And we upon time's farthest height
Still see it flash across the night.

Uplift the brand, nor fear the burn;
Dare, in a world of doubt, to learn
That God attains Himself through you —
Christ lives today in them that do.

TO MY BOY

On His First Birthday

LITTLE stranger from a world unknown,
Little pilgrim starting on your quest,
Little spirit with your flight unflown,
Nestling sheltered at the mother's breast,

By what mystic alchemy divine
Do I live, transfigured in your form,
Thus commingled with a spirit fine,
Thus repatterned to a fairer norm?

But your eyes repeat your mother's fair,
As the pool that mirrors heaven's blue,
And the halo of your golden hair
Hints the glory she bequeathes to you.

By such tokens do we claim you ours,
Yet no mortal genesis alone
Bound you to the tyranny of hours,
Cast your spirit in the flesh and bone.

Faring hither from the past obscure
With the taper life to light you far,
Tho' it flicker out, shall love endure,
Guide to lead you toward your goal — a star!

You are ours in trust a little time,
  Ours to start upon the upward trail.
May the little feet grow strong to climb,
  May the heart expand, the will avail.

Tiny hands shall strengthen to their need,
  Tiny lips shall learn to speak in praise;
Child, I charge you, one monition heed,
  One commandment keep through all your days:

Learn to serve, with hand and heart and brain,
  God within you find, not far above;
Toil for beauty, give, and thereby gain,
  Thus transmute your labor into love.

A TURBULENT SPIRIT

A TURBULENT spirit mine,
Untamed like frightened bird
Fluttering against the wires,
Beating upon its cage;
Spirit of wild unrest,
Of the lion gnashing the bars,
Snarling in futile rage,
Roaring his vain desire
To roam unfettered far
O'er dun dim Nubian plains;
Spirit of brawny blacksmith
With fist of iron beating
The keys of ebon and ivory
And howling in impotent wrath
At the jangle and crash of sound
When he would that music respond;
Spirit of writhing madness,
Of the maniac beating his head
On the walls of his padded cell
And crying unto death
To free his imprisoned soul.

Ah yes, these spirits all my spirit seemed
Until one day a little wild bird sang,

Or was it an opening flower that smiled to me,
Or was it beam of sun that sought me out?
For something whispered timidly and low:
" Peace, peace," and only " peace." But I replied:
" Nay, nay, I am a fighter, let me fight,
Whack with my blade at phantoms mocking me,
Thrust at the effigies of mortal men,
Smite the tormentor Life who prisons me
In walls of flesh and wrest from him the prize,
The blessed boon of Death he holds from me."
But still the voice reiterated, " Peace."
Perchance it was a child's voice mocking me,
Or wafted whisper from another world;
So very close to me the murmur sounds
It almost seems my own soul crying " Peace."
Perchance 'tis God or one of his dear angels
Singing beatitudes from spheres afar.

At last my spirit answers: " I am free!
Yes, yes, a wild cloud-winging bird am I
Singing my arias in life's radiant morn;
A lion-spirit, bold, untamed and strong,
Bounding o'er native wildernesses wild;
A master craftsman of the spell-bound keys
Whose every touch evokes divine response,
A philosophic sage with cosmic mind
Compounding out of chaos, order, law.

" Now verily I find my strife in vain,
Since Life, transfigured to a gladsome child
Has beckoned me, and, pointing to his feet,
Shown me his shadow Death across his path."
So may I grow in peace and grace of love,
Knowing that shadows must betoken light.
Calmly I wander on th' eternal way —
Dear God, I take Thy hand and walk in peace.

COMPENSATION

FOR every pang a thrill of joy,
For every sin a deed of grace,
For every curse a benison —
Somewhere, somehow, sometime!

This is my faith, that God is just,
That wrong shall be resolved in right,
That out of darkness breaks the light.

We would not have eternal day,
We would not have all happiness;
The shadows make the glow more bright,
The night-gloom glorifies the day
And sorrow sanctifies our bliss.

So if this life seem mostly lost
In one dull reach of dreary gloom,
And if the good be bowed in dust,
What matters it, if God be just?

The great world plan cannot be wrong,
In other lives, on other spheres
The good God justifies earth-tears,
And souls that suffer shall be blessed.

OUR HERITAGE OF JOY

SUNSHINE and laughter and song,
These are ours by inalienable right;
So come, wise owl, stop hooting at night,
The world is not all wrong.

Cheer up, old comrade, be friends with the weather!
The donkey brays
For tempting sprays
Just beyond his tether,
Knowing not that the grass at his feet
Is full as sweet
And far more tender than the thistles out of reach.

Ah, could we but learn what we so glibly teach,
That a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush,
We would not forever scramble and push
With our pinch of salt after birds awing;
Why not let them sing, man, let them sing,
And you sing too, and perchance you may find
That, just as they did to Orpheus, the birds will
come to you —
The little birds of hope from heaven blue —
If you are only kind —
Remember that, now — mind!

GROWTH

NOTHING is meaningless, nothing is vain
In this big world of promise, this cycle of pain;
Every pang that we suffer, as daily we plod,
Is lifting our spirits through anguish to God.

We climb on adversity ceaselessly higher,
We mount on each lowly unworthy desire;
The beast that possessed us thro' ages of night
We master and rule as we grow toward the light.

Thro' our lowly upyearnings we grasp the full plan
As the ape chatters idly, yet teaches the man,
And the man gravely ponders that angels may learn;
For we climb on the states that we conquer and spurn.

THE CHANT OF LIFE TODAY

ARE we all Circe-mad with life's new wine?
Crazed with the thirst of power until we seek
Some opiate to dispel the brute obsession?
Is life a phrenzy of illusionment,
A nightmare harrying our souls away
From ivy-crownéd Joy's impassioned court?

The royal guest frequents our banquet board —
A grinning skeleton in sheeted shroud
Who shrives us gaily ere he tolls the bell.

So let us snatch from Death these frantic hours
Of revelry, our senses to beguile
With viands sauced to tempt our glutton greed,
The while an outburst of erotic song
In syncopated rhythm rends the air.

And should some skinny-fingered palsied hag
Come skulking in to whine her loathsome plea:
"Good sirs, I'm starving, give me but a crust,"
Why, let the waiter hustle her away.
Why should we tip the fellow unless he ban
Such spectres from these sacred halls of mirth?

And so if I must cater to an age
Jaded with rag-time and mad cacophony,
Must it be vaudeville you wring from me?
Ha, would you have me blare on the trombone,
Smash down the cymbals and lambaste the drum
To punctuate some brash coon-yeller's bawl?
Should I ride Pegasus across your stage
Transmogrified into a hobby-horse
With antic monkey tugging at the strings?

No, look, the hand is writing on the wall,
Awake ye soused and listless banqueters,
Ye dare not glance with mocking eyes askance,
For now, behold the hour of reckoning!

And so I sing in your unwilling ears
A raucous chant of life and death and truth,
A hymn of beggars and bedlam hags and thieves,
A song of felons in and out of cells,
A plea of paupers and little soul-starved children.

I sing of life, not glozed with silk and gems,
But grimed in sweat-shop, groggery and dive,
Mocked in palatial halls of empty pomp,
Flung from divorce courts and from bated breath
Of scandal-mongers eager with their tale
To damn the good name of their nearest friend.

Think you to find some balm in Gilead,
Some ready-made placebo for the soul,
Some life-elixir or magician's spell
To rob the hive of life without a sting?
Go, ask Canute how long he stayed the tide,
Stick on the severed head and galvanize
The stiff cold corpse and bid it preach your creed!

Ah, dreamers, lulled with opiate sophistries,
Knowest not the taint of earth's mortality
Is in our flesh despite our yea and nay?
The overlord sits grinning at the feast
And late or soon cries "Come!" and we obey.

So let us dare to face the sober truth,
Look straight into its eye, nor flinch nor wince.
How many hungry mouths in the proud city
Would thank God for the scrapings from your plate?

What of the desolating holocaust
That sweeps the world in war's proud panoply?
That immolates upon the altar Hate
Unnumbered millions tossed in Moloch's maw?

Your platitudes are staggered by the sight
Of starving nations and dismembered hordes,
A million mothers crying in the rain,
A fleet of full-crewed ships of war that lie
Amid the sea things in the ghastly deeps.

Ah, dilettanti and blazé esthetes,
I hear you sniff " iconoclast " at me,
You yawn and edge away, your jaded nerves
To rouse with new sensations, nothing loath.
But wait, for like the Ancient Mariner
I hold you, wedding guest, to hear my plea.

Do we not tear ramshackle rookeries down
Ere we erect great steel-wrought skeletons
And pile our walls above the Pyramids?
So would I tear down cant and sham today,
Materialism's sneer at holy things —
Burn every filthy stick of rotten wood
And ram down piles to base our structure well.

Come, comrades, reverently I question you:
Think you God saw that tiny starveling child
Look up with piteous appeal to mother eyes
That rained tears on its little shrunken form
And let it die with anguish unallayed?

Think you God saw the wanton murderer
Blot out the life of yon frail hapless maid,
Nor stayed the hand uplifted for the blow?
Think you God countenances sin and shame
For no intent in His great cosmic plan?
What monster of a God would we adore!
Nay, we but fashion karmas for our souls
To expiate in progress through the stars.

Schooled in adversity and wrong and woe
We learn, upclambering on the stony way,
Bearing our crosses unto Calvary.

And these our transient bodies, weak and frail,
Are fiddles whereupon we play life's tune,
And who the fiddler? Soul, now have your say,
Rag or sonata do you mean to play? —
For, as you play in th' flesh, so shall it be
When you sing in th' glorious choir of heavenly
spheres.

Ah, let it be a joyous part you play,
Of loving kindness ringing round the sphere!
Tune up your strings (you're in the symphony
Of brotherhood) and play with all your will.
God is conductor, and the clash and strife
But sanctifies the heart for holy strains;
Play the allegro now — good will to men.
Mindless of self, with world-wide sympathy,
A great andante chorale swells to heaven.
Ah, players, keep in tune and do not lag,
Watch the Conductor's baton beat the time —
God! this is heaven on earth, life's symphony!

TRIUMPHANT BEAUTY

TOWARD beauty yearns my heart unceasingly;
Its ghost I clasp, and in my eager hand
I find but emptiness tormenting me;
The hour-glass am I that sifts the sand.

O rainbow wraith, could I but hold your ray!
O butterfly that flutters o'er the rose,
Why must you wing so joyously away,
The sport of every vagrant breeze that blows?

O love that seemed to cling in constancy,
Along came Death to woo thee, and behold,
Thee even did he take away from me!
Amid the damp of night I wander cold.

But in the darkness and the chilling gloom
I caught the glimmer of a quivering star,
And from the dreary silence of the tomb
Awoke a voice across the void afar:

"Not in the frozen witchery of death
Is beauty prisoned, but in life it wings
Triumphant toward the blue with panting breath
And in immortal freedom joyous sings."

WOMAN

THE hairy cave-man clutched his mate
And snarled out: "Woman, slave,
On thee I slake my thirst.
Beget me children,
Do my work,
Beware my wrath!"
And she, the weak one, silently obeyed.

The knight unto the tourney rode
And proudly cried:
"For thee, O fair one, would I break my lance,
Or take the cold steel of my haughty rival.
Thou plaything of my idle hours,
Safe mewed within the castle moat,
Be thou but as thy scarf
That flutters from my helmet in the field,
A whimsey bright and fair,
Or jewel on my shield;"
And she, the sleeping princess, dreamed
And said: "'Tis well, my lord, 'tis well."

For many a year the princess drowsed in peace
Until the Knight of Freedom rode anigh
And at the castle postern knocked

And cried: "Awake! Awake!"
The cock crowed for the dawning,
The dogs barked lustily,
The old clock in the hall
Resumed its ticking after silent centuries.

The dreaming princess, from her trance aroused,
Beheld herself unconquered, unafraid,
And spake out: "He who taketh me
Must win me every day and every hour,
Win me with love and hold me with its power.
No more a noble's thrall am I,
No more a master's underling.
Henceforth, by God's decree
I stand his equal, free,
A living dauntless soul
Daring to face the whole
Of destiny's great plan,
Friend and helpmate of man."
And so she grew in womanhood and grace,
More worthy mother of a lordlier race.

A MASQUE OF THE CITY

A WHIRLWIND of faces adown the dark street,
A clatter of hoof-beats, a scuffle of feet,
A clanging of bells and a rumble of wheels
As round me the tempest Humanity reels,
As past me the Juggernaut Destiny reels.

What on the faces that pass do I read?
Blood is the script and the motto is Greed!
Pale are the spectres that sweep down the pave,
Pale as the foam on the crest of the wave,
Pallid as foam when the angry seas rave.

Women and children and men in the throng,
Troubled with life in a tumult of wrong,
Weary of earning the boon of a grave,
Paying for power the price of a slave,
Selling their souls for the gold they may save!

Civilization and progress I hear
Dinned by a discord of pain on my ear;
A scramble for gold and a scuffle for gain
And who shall not say at the last, "It is vain?"
And who shall not cry at the close, "All in vain!"

Lift up the masks from the throng in the street;
Fling off the weeds of despair and deceit,
Under the turmoil of passionate strife
Pushes the spirit of beauteous life —
God is beneath all the pain that is rife.

NOT IN VAIN

I BLEW a bubble of radiant hue
That imaged the earth and the tremulous blue,
But the frail bubble burst as its wonderment grew.

I builded a hope like a cloud of gold
That arched o'er the land in its radiant fold,
But the dream broke in tears on the earth's drear mold.

I folded a love to my aching heart,
But it pierced and it pained like the sting of a dart,
For the love was a thorn and I shrank from its smart.

But the thorn bore a blossom that bloomed at my breast,
And the hope was upbuilded of brooding unrest,
And the thing I had fancied most cruel, was best.

FORBIDDEN FRUIT

DEEP have I bitten the bitter-sweet fruit of the
Garden of Life and of longing,
Plucked from its bower of brambles, and pricked by
its thorns till I cried out with pain,
And its juice, red as heart-blood, has stained me, but O
like the fruit serpent-guarded in Eden,
Or the gold apples watched by the daughters of Hes-
per, the prize beyond price must be bought
By sorrow and danger, for lo I have learned of the
meaning of good and of evil,
Have eaten the fruit at my peril and now as the gods
must be strong to endure.

THE CHANT OF THE SOUL TRIUMPHANT

COME hither, all ye sad and sorrowing ones,
Come, heavy-hearted, lonely spirits, come,
For I, too, through the Valley of the Shadow
Have walked with bowed head thoughtfully and slow.

And I would sing to thee, O weary heart,
No solemn-chanted Miserere,
No dirge of doom or march funerbe,
But words of gladness in triumphant strains.

When friends have deserted thee as haggard Want
stalked to thy door,
When hydra-headed Trouble hissed in thy pathway
with threatening fangs,
Thou hast cried: Woe is me, ah misery!

When thou hast seemed like Job accursed of Heaven,
Or like Prometheus felt the bird of Zeus rending thy
flesh,
Thou hast cried unto God: O let me die!

And in His wisdom he hath called instead
The dear beloved one who was thy staff of life,
And left thee weltering in the deeps alone.

Ye cannot comprehend the cosmic plan,
Yet know that somehow shall the wrong be right,
And dare to walk erect and face the world.

Sing like the meadow-lark in rain as well as in the sun,
Like the snake in the spring-time slough off the scales of care,
Cast the devils of fear out of thee and be a conqueror!

O could I chant to thee as David unto Saul,
I'd sing thee of all the gladness of the year —
Of the joy of the winds, of the sweep and the freedom of tempests,
Of the laughter of waters, the shout of the masterful ocean,
Of the fire ecstatic that warms thee, the radiant sunbeams,
Yea, and the love elemental that surges in time to thy heart-beats,
That thrills thee with beauty and sets thy soul free in the heavens.

O I rejoice that God is throned amid the high places,
And as I climb the mountains toward His seat,
Upward, forever upward, let me sing
The song of Life the Conqueror,
And his victory over pain and death;
Sing the chant of the soul triumphant
And the glory and joy of the conquest.

THE TRUTH

I CRAVE the truth, stark naked, unashamed;
And should it smite me, let me face the pang,
Aye, turn the other cheek, and cry, again!
If I have coddled error to my breast,
Let me cast forth the viper ere it sting.
God, grant to me the hospitable mind
Ready to welcome from the vast unknown
The little children of the Master Truth.

And so when Science in his crucible
Melts down the images of saints and gods,
Shall we not save the residue of gold
And toss aside the worthless lump of slag?
Why should we stumble on our march to death
With clumsy fardels of antique device,
Like Sinbad packing round an incubus?

Do I disturb you, comfortable friend?
Who'd have the surgeon diagnose a cancer?
No, let us live in fatuous content!
The old-wives' tales we learned on nurse's knee
Will serve for passport through Saint Peter's gate,
And so we preen ourselves before the world.

But Galileo, the iconoclast,
Not thus obeisance made to prejudice.
When he spied out God's order in the skies,
And how the riven sun in pangs of birth
Cast from its side the world,
Not e'en the Inquisition's grim intent
Could shake his proclamation of the truth.
Bible and Pope might thunder out the law,
But his calm voice above the turmoil rose.

So Darwin to the scoffers made reply
With piléd facts no sophistry could shake.
His the new Genesis from nature's bible,
Of creatures struggling through millenniums,
Through patient cycles of ascending forms;
He told of primal protoplasmic cells
Controlled by laws immutable, that grew
Even as the flower unfurling from the seed
And culminating in the master man.

It hurts your pride perchance, to trace your line
Back to some prehistoric chattering ape.
Of what avail, if so it runs?
You would not, like the ostrich, hide your head
In desert sand to 'scape the huntsman Truth.
Beware black magic curse of bigotry!

But Science is not God's elect disciple,
And many an error has she treasured fast

Beneath her academic cloak of smug conceit.
Ah savants, be not overproud, I pray,
You too must bow before the Mighty One.
There may be finer laws than you dissolve
With microscope and telescope and spectrum,
More subtle forces than your prying eyes
Can penetrate amid the unknown dark.

What are your laws but visions of the unseen Will?
What are your forces but the thinking of the perfect Mind?
So open wide your hearts to His great light,
O seekers after truth, and as the child
Who strays afield and finds a paradise of flowers,
Walk into God's great garden sown with stars
And lift your eyes aloft and cry—"'Tis good!"

THE SHRINE OF GOD

BREAK with old saws, old rituals, creeds and cant;
Why must we worship Mumbo-Jumbo still?
Why practice voodoistic gibberish
With all the sanctimonious airs of piety?
The shaman shouts, and at his nod we turn;
Through all the mummery of haranguing priest
The medicine-man with drum and shaking rattle
Still capers, decked in feathers and wild paint
To scare the devils that harass our dreams.

O once for all have done with him, be free;
No intermediary stands 'twixt thee and God
Whose robes are wind-swept trees and drifting clouds,
Whose voice is in the bird-song and the sea,
Whose temple is the heart of yearning man
Where He sits throned in grace and majesty.
O laboring soul, in reverence seek His shrine,
The open sesame whereto is love.

O ELUSIVE ONE

I LOOK in your eyes,
I take your hand,
Words come and go,
Betwixt us twin,
But you, O soul,
I do not know,—
Only the symbol,
Only the sign.

I hear your laughter,
I see you weeping,
I feel the warmth
Of your breath on my cheek;
Only the spirit
I may not fathom,
I look and follow
But never find.

Ever I seek
The wraith elusive;
I kiss you and press you
Close to my heart;
Dearer than life,
O lovely sphinx,
Will-o'-the-wisp,
My wander child!

CONVENTIONS

STAY, little slant-eyed mother in Cathay,
Cut off the swathes and free your baby's feet;
You Flat-head squaw, take off the bandages
From your papoose and press the skull in shape;
And O proud heir of all the ages wrong,
Dare you distort the plastic lovely form
God trusts to you to rear to woman's grace?

Ah 'tis the mindless master of the masque,
Stale custom, lording over us its law,
Who pours our souls like molten brass in moulds
And turns us out distorted images;
It is the Gorgon's head that petrifies;
Like Lot's forsaken wife we turn to salt.

Must we take consul of the low-browed ape
And heedless mimic what the courts of style
Decree, contemptuous of beauty's right?
Dame Fashion folds her paper, takes her shears
And cuts out strings of dolls in mocking scorn.
We are the dolls she gives her laughing child,
The World, to play with while it pleases her,
Then crumples us and throws us in the fire.

Come, let us flout the autocrat inane,
Parley no more with freakish vanities,
No longer wear the badge of servitude
But find our sanction in the inner light.
For beauty out of nature's heart is born
And grows in freedom unto fruitfulness.

PLAYING THE PART

COME, make a bluff of courage, timid one!
Assume the port of valor, play the part,
Till acting it with usage oft renewed
So breeds it in thy being and thy brain
Thou growest to the stature of a man.
Not the swashbuckler or Quixotic knight
Swaggering before stuffed effigies of straw,
Tilting with windmills —fake knight errantry!
But real deep-hearted acting till in sooth
The marionettes with life are animate,
The actors attitudinize no more
But, willy-nilly, now assume the rôle,
Live the heroic part and laugh at fear,
Throw dice with fate, and, be it gain or loss
Cry, such is life, come, try another toss!

LONGING

FOR the unutterable,
For the ineffable
Am I longing
In dead of night:
For the rose unfading,
The song unending,
The heart unchanging,
For love, for light!

I would gather the stars,
The flowers of heaven;
For my garden bright
Is the beautiful whole;
I would stray with thee
O'er night's wide meadow,
O spirit maiden,
O radiant soul!

THE TIME SPIRIT

OUT of impenetrable Chaos, black and wild,
Behold, belovéd, upward-surging Mind,
The Master Spirit mated unto Love —
These twain creators of the firmament,
Of earth and heaven and all the host of stars,
Of life and death and all strange pageantries
Of shades and shadows in the wilderness,
Forever sweeping in my tireless keep;
For lo, the progeny of Mind and Love
Am I, familiar spirit of my heavenly sire.

The weaver I of world-dreams and of weird
Phantasmagorial shades that rise and ride
From star-dust to the hymning host of heaven.
I rove like honey-bee 'mid blossoming bells
From zonéd Saturn unto channelled Mars,
And up the void to worlds unvisited,
Where bright Arcturus flames remote and vast.

My hands unite the future with the past,
The unformed figments of tomorrow's pomp
With legions of inchoate wraiths of thought,
Unissued from the womb of mystery.

I am the hoar ghost at the van of time,
Leading the ages onward into light.
The swing of planets round the mother sun
Mark golden scrolls upon the boundless blue
For signs and symbols of my tireless flight.

I am the world-pulse and my laboring heart
Throbs with the myriad heart-beats of the spheres.
My way is semperternal and I lead
My votaries unto darkling glades of death.
I sift the sands of mortal thought and deed
And in my palm preserve the grains of gold;
My flail forever winnows out the chaff
And sets it whirling down the gusty years,
While in my granary the grain is housed.

Lo, I am Fate, belovéd, and I brood
O'er worlds and men and cosmic cavalcades,
Filing down the ages to their doom,
Wending amid the stars to victory.

QUOTH SOCRATES

QUOTH Socrates, the seer,
To idlers in the agora:
" I am a pestilent gad-fly
To sting you until you think."

So in our streets of trade
Would I go buzzing round
'Mongst men whose god is gold
And make them cry in pain.

A PICTURE OF MAMMON

O FOR Angelo the mighty,
Sculptor of grim allegories,
Painter of heroic prophets,
Limner of colossal sibyls!

I would have him paint a picture,
Make a mural decoration
For the temple men are building,
Tier on tier, amidst the city.

In the center of the pageant
Mammon sits enthroned, triumphant —
Him to whom men own allegiance,
Master of the marts of progress,
Blindly worshipped god or devil,
Gilded monster of the revel.

At his feet a squid is sprawling,
Giant cuttlefish uncanny,
With its tentacles wide reaching —
Flabby arms with suckers studded —
Stretching far and near about it,
Twined around the fleeing people

Who in vain, with hands uplifted,
Wildly clutch the great octopus
Like Laocoon and his children
In the python's folds encircled.

Round the dais of King Mammon
Stand the few elect, elated,
Rapt in gaze upon their master,
Paying orisons unnumbered
To the demon high exalted.

Far below, a host of toilers
Armed with sledge and pick and mallet
Seek to storm the shrine of Mammon,
By the devil-fish protected.
They would worship with the mighty,
They would trample on their brothers,
Crowd them down and climb upon them
Upward toward the throne of Mammon,
But the great octopus stays them
Where they crowd in ranks defiant.

Then, above this sombre pageant
See! the clouds that lower, breaking,
And a child against the azure
Standing with his gaze appealing!
Lo, a little child shall lead them,
Lo, the child heart, loving, tender,
Shall redeem this world of sorrow!

THE TOIL OF WIZARD WHEELS

ELVES all invisible serve us with tireless toil,
Thralls elemental subdued by o'er-mastering man,
Genii that come at our call on their weird wings of fire.

Hist! like a lightning-bolt flashes our warning afar,
Borne by the goblins erratic on mystical waves,
Startling the nations that list to the missive in awe.

Weariless gnomes roll the myriad wheels of the world,
Roaring with might irresistible onward they rush,
Bearing the restless insatiable multitude on.

Spirits titanic are turning the wild wheels of toil,
Grinding and crushing and pressing crude matter to form,
Tossing the shuttles in looms and transmuting the ore.

Ah, this tempestuous spirit of steel and of steam,
Wires electrified, dynamos, motors enthralled,
Madly onrushing for man with ironical roar!

Whom do they serve with their magic of wizard-work mighty?

Mastered by potentates merciless claiming the toll of
their toil,
Clutching the fruits of their labor that falls at their
feet.

List! 'tis the laughter of devils that mock as they turn
Wheels of the mills of the fiends that are roaring anear,
Wheels purgatorial grinding our souls as they turn.

Listen! the clattering kobolds that beat at our hearts!
Hearken! the din of the demons usurping the work
Freemen had erstwhile accomplished with song on their
lips!

Witches' wheels, purring like cats by the fire of doom
Charm us with whirling hypnotic, till lo, on our knees,
Worshipful bow we entranced by the eidolon Power,

Forgetting our mission on earth to create and to serve,
God-will in man to emancipate matter with soul,
Glorify passionless clay with our hands and our hearts.

Let us, O brothers, establish our right to create!
Let us again do the world's work and reap our reward,
Let us dispel the enchantments that dazzle our sight.

Then may we use eerie kobolds and gins for our needs,
Not as their parasites, corpulent grown by their toil,

But masters by right of the glory of work we have
wrought.

Then, like the seraphim chanting God's praise in the
light,
Man shall mould earth into heaven by joy-giving toil,
Swelling the choir of the spheres with terrestrial praise.

AFTER LOSS

THE living presence of the flesh we crave
Until death summons us beyond the grave
To dwell in spiritual realms that rise
Beyond the confines of our earthly eyes.

Through sorrow's ministering touch we grow;
What erst we groped for, now in faith we know;
That God shall not grind spirit into dust,
Souls come and go — we wait in boundless trust.

We know the Cosmos makes no mock of man,
To leave unfinished what the Lord began;
That no eternal irony of Fate
Shall show the vista and then bar the gate.

All we have cherished shall we treasure still;
Above the atoms doth the spirit thrill.
Today we serve; tomorrow — O my soul
Fear not the way that leads to freedom's goal!

MEMORIES

MEMORIES, ah memories,
Sweet haunting dreams of dead yet fadeless faces,
Dear hallowed presences that cling so fast,
Fond scenes that float forever through the past,
Insouciant songs and laughter sounding still
In hollow echoes from entombéd years,
How dear, how deathless all those idle tones!

Loves lost, lives sundered, only memories
Of tender words amid the woodland flowers,
Once charged with passion, now but poignant pain,
Faces that from the shadowy boscage peer,
So fleeting, evanescent, yet so fair!
All memories, sweet memories!

Ah joys, now buried in the brain's deep crypt,
Your ghosts still haunt the night in pallid shrouds,
Bitter with mocking laughter and dead songs,
And yet I welcome your cinereous throng;
My friends, my kinsmen, my departed love,
Come, be at peace with me, dear memories!

THE SOUL OF THINGS

THROUGH all this palpitating phantasmagoria,
Through all this vibrating, pulsing, throbbing scene
I would reach down to the soul of things —
Peer behind the jaunty plumes of the jay,
Listen beyond his mocking laughter loud,
See into his bright impudent bead eyes
And say: O brother spirit, what art thou?

Gaze through the tremulous whispering redwood branches,
Penetrate the ruddy bark and the fragrant wood,
Not as the ax seeks the core, but with the eye of love,
And ask of this venerable sage of the mountain slope,
Who art thou, kinsman, that thou dost comfort me?

Scan the golden trumpet of the mimulus
That blows upon the marshy mountain meadows,
And back of the golden flare of the blithe calyx
Behold the dear life of the unfolding flower;
See the real, the divine spirit, and say unto it,
Sister, I love you — you and I of the same Father.

Look into the soil and the stalwart rock
Deeper than ever well or mine has bored,
Deeper than the enchanted crystal locked
And sealed in granite tombs, aye deeper
Than glist'ning nuggets in the veinéd quartz,
Look into the soul of the mountains vast and cry,
" O brother mine, I greet you, I salute you!
Let me rest upon your mighty shoulders grim."

Cast mine eyes aloft into the illimitable blue
Where dapplings of white cloud drift silent past,
And search through the whiteness of congealéd mist,
Aye, fathom the azure of the vault of heaven
And cry out unto the spirit of the air,
" Ætherial one, O let me look on thee! "

Then, ah, then, I gaze into the eyes of love
That image the mountains and the trees and the sky,
Deep, deep within enraptured eyes I peer,
Longingly and tenderly I look where the uplifted lid
With fringéd curtain hath unveiled the tinted iris,
Into the dark mysterious well of the pupil,
Into the fathomless fount of life where a kindred soul
awaits me,
And I whisper: " My treasured one, the secret here
is guarded,
Thine eyes are the doorway to the throne of the Most
High! "

TO THE BUILDERS OF THE NEW CITY

O WORKINGMEN with cranes, steam drills and engines panting loud,
Bolting and riveting great frames of steel and burying all
In concrete casings, building mighty piles of stone and tile,
Why all this stir and noise, this hauling and hoisting near and far?
And the jovial workmen cried: "Our city, earthquake gripped and swayed,
By fire ravaged and devoured, was well-nigh swept away,
And now we are uprearing it anew, more stately planned,
More strong, more fair than ever it had been if left unscathed."

"'Tis well," I answered, "but O workmen knowest not that some
Who saw your city burn gave up their lives in serving you,
Feeding and clothing and sheltering you in dire adversity?

They too are building cities, fairer than you have
planned or dreamed,—
Cities of golden deeds of sacrifice and loving thought,
And some day you will learn from them to rear more
strong and true
A spirit city that no shock of fate can move or mar,
A city of unworldliness, of truth and brotherhood."

'TIS WELL

'TIS well, 'tis well! —
What?
Why, all's well!
The felon in his cell?
Aye, somehow 'tis well.
The marriage bell,
The death knell,
Surely all is well.
We but seem to rush pell mell
To the very brink of Hell.
Why, I cannot tell,
But God knows 'tis well.

OUR BROTHERS OF THE FIELDS AND TREES

I DREAMED that I was Francis of Assisi
In shadowy daisy field of misty dawn,
The children of the air, my ministrants,
Flocking about with matins of sweet song.

" My tiny choristers of field and tree,
Blithe winged disciples," so my sermon ran,
" I bring the word of God to comfort you,
Good tidings of our Savior Christ, the risen."

And thereupon wings flapped about my face
And cries derisive rang from feathered throats.
" You of the Titan race," they shrilly called,
" Who preach of love and seek us but to slay,
Apostates revelling in lust of blood! "

A mother robin 'plained: " What bliss was mine,
What hope, what promise in those eggs of blue,
Snug in my plastered cradle hid away
Until the prying bandit eyes had pierced
My leafy screen and my dear home despoiled! "

" Alas," outpiped the quail, " the huntsman came
And slew my chosen mate, and called it sport,
While I am left in lonely copse to mourn."

Then with a wail of anguish winged anigh
A snowy egret like an angel white
Out of the mist of heaven to challenge me:
" A host of wings erstwhile amid the trees,
A throng of mothers' hearts about the nests!
Ah little did they dream of ravage drear,
That mothers of the lordlier race of men
So craved our nuptial dower of airy plumes
That they should have us slain in wantonness
While all our little ones with piteous cries
Awaited the slow stealing on of death."

Thereat the frantic birds came clamoring round
To mob me from the grove with mocking scorn,
When loud a gun pealed forth its breath of doom,
Some passing sportsman's challenge to the throng,
And lifeless fluttered down a feathery form.
Startled I roused me from my sombre dream
But shook not off the woodland reverie.

What is this life we take so wantonly?
A spark of God's great love so stamped upon
Because we have the craft and lust to kill!
What Golden Rule is made for man alone?
The beast looks in yours eyes and cries you shame.
Let us renounce blood sacraments and dare
To live untainted by corrupting flesh,
And in the might of tenderness rejoice.

Methinks that Buddha's way leads unto peace
Through kinship with the least and lowliest lives.
All are God's children, even as thou and I,
United in the spirit brotherhood,
And in th' eternal reckoning shall be
Accounted in the great Creator's plan.

THE MASTER

In Memory of Henry Holmes

WE press the hemlock to the lips of Socrates,
Our Christ we crucify, Jeanne d'Arc we cast to flames,
And Shelley banish as an infidel.

O master of celestial music's realm,
O comrade in the world of melody,
What must we suffer as we Godward yearn!

Pain is the price of beauty, and in vain
We conjure up fair pageantries of sound,
To ears that hear not, offering our prayer.

O dreamer of fair dreams melodious,
Thy gift of love to hearts that heed thee not,
Why are God's emissaries so denied?

But slowly shall the sleeper find his own,
His tribute to soul beauty gaining power,
Swelling adown the years its lofty plea.

Knocking at hearts' sealed chambers till they ope
In wonder to the message, and we hear

Lips murmur: Ah could we have known the man,
How would we then have loved and honored him!

Too late! too late!
We stone our prophets and then mourn their fate,
Pronounce anathemas before we praise,
Cry out the wrongs we cannot rectify,
Deny the master when we see him pass,
Question and cavil when he pleads for grace,
Then, when the noisy world vouchsafes acclaim
Cry hail! But he is dead. Long live the king!

Dead did I say? O God, forgive,
We die but to more truly live,
Free from the dross of earth that weighs
And cumbers the sad soul with weary days.

Hark! canst not hear great Bach's immortal strain,
And Beethoven's high pæans of God-like pain?
The maestro plays today in other spheres,
And could we hear him it would startle tears
To our cold eyes and quicken the slow beat
Of hearts that throb not with prophetic heat.

Ah will we never learn that love is best,
That each great soul that toils in beauty's quest
Creates not creeds and forms to stifle soul
But builds a rainbow span from goal to goal,

From earth to heaven, from flesh to spirit pure?
O doubting heart, of this one truth be sure,
Though worlds may waste and suns grow dead and
cold,
God cannot spare one gleam of the sun gold
Of love, but treasures all to be
Builded in beauty for eternity.

ON HEARING MUSIC

To Adela Verne

BUILDER of sky pavilions of God-aspiring tone,
Reared unto radiant glory and fashioned of spirit alone;
Wielder of mystical melodies woven of tremulous sound,
Hymning of angels attends thee, and splendor of heaven is round.

Hush'd is the air and breathless as melodies liquidly glide,
Swelling into a tumult and sweeping the brain like a tide,
Storming the sea of passion and shouting triumphant glee,
For the soul from its fetters is loosened and music hath set it free.

Out of the temples of cloudland, priests in processional far
Fare away singing forever in quest of the ultimate star;
Chargers of heav'n are trampling the rainbow paths that span
The haunts of the hymning seraphs with this earth-bound home of man.

And list! 'Tis the silver footfalls of the wraiths of
the wandering spheres,
And the ghosts of the host of the masters returned on
the tide of years,
Living again and loving the world that has spurned
them long,
Binding fond hearts with courage, and bidding fond
hope be strong.

Challenging man with music and charging him soar
from earth,
Bursting the chrysalis custom at radiant Psyche's birth;
Freeing the flesh from thralldom, winging the man with
fire,
For what of the strife and hunger, save to make the
soul aspire?

You who commune with the masters, with craft to
reveal their hearts,
Know all the pain and the rapture which the grace of
your giving imparts;
Fleeting the sounds as they follow and into the silence
glide,
But sweet is the dream that lingers and strong are the
joys that abide.

THE PAINTER

William Keith

WITH senses dulled and eyes lacklustreless
We look on nature, having not the key
To world-old treasuries of beauty, free
Alone to haunters of the wilderness,

To spirits who in solitude commune
In that dim world of fancy not of earth
Where teeming treasuries of thought have birth
And souls with tremulous beauty are in tune.

We, having eyes that see not, needs must learn
From them who look beneath the passing show,
Enkindling nature with the ardent glow
Of spirits who toward hallowed altars yearn.

Our restless sense-enthralléd lives are spent
In fruitless quests that boot us naught of worth
Unless we fashion something out of earth
To yield us beauty and divine content.

So unto you, good friend, I turn and say,
Well done O toiler who unceasingly
Has striven with nature's show for mastery,
Has wrought fair scenes that will not fade away.

You reverently have gazed on hill and tree,
  On cloud-hung sky transcribed in glassy pool,
  On snowy mount and shadowy cañon cool,
On all of California's pageantry,

And with obedient brush portrayed her moods
  Attuned to your own high imaginings
  Of haunted woods and skies an angel's wings
Had fanned amid celestial solitudes.

Nature, so filtered through a poet's soul
  That only beauty stays in glorious guise,
  Startles us as we look in fresh surprise
On wind-tossed trees and sunset clouds that roll,

On purple vistas through the shadowy boughs,
  On golden oaks where trancéd lovers stray,
  And meadows pranked in tender green of May
Or sere when toilers stack the rounded mows.

So friend, interpreter of nature's heart,
  Creator of a world of radiant dreams,
  Transfigurer of evanescent beams
Of sun that from the cloudy heavens dart,

I hail you master, by the western sea,
  To you we owe all loving gratitude
  For this rich treasure of a life imbued
With beauty, spent in toil so lavishly

That all might share the vision you possess,
In reverent transcripts of the golden light,
In fond communings with the holy night
Revealing nature's strength and tenderness.

TO INA COOLBRITH

The California Poetess

WISTFUL the grace of the autumn with mellowing mist in the valleys,
With herbage green of the early rains when life in the sered grass rallies;
Gracious the wane of the season when th' wind in the laurels is sighing,
For we know that the spring is awaiting to rise from the year that is gloriously dying;
Even as the brown leaves fall from the bough are the green buds bursting,
And the angel of death holds the cup of love to the lips with longing thirsting.

Afar o'er the region in rapture the spirit of beauty has printed
God's seal on the radiant land of his loving and th' grace of the sun-king has glinted
From the ranges of sky-searching granite to the foam-rimmed roaring ocean
Where th' orient winds o'er the fretted sea have winged in their wild commotion;
And th' rune of the surf and the croon of the pines and the whisper of flowers,

Commingled in chorals ascend from the vales and the high imperial towers,
Singing of El Dorado, of the realm that we know is truly
The Golden Gate where the spirits await on their way to the Ultima Thule.

O uncrowned queen of the minstrels who sing in the wild-wood hollows,
Songs like the tremulous thrush's are thine as the gloaming the hot day follows,
Songs that are throbbing with longing and sobs of the dusk wind stealing,
Songs of the heart of the care-ladened host, their tumultuous hopes revealing.
Little the world will listen to the rustle of angels winging,
And the gold-mad throng will catch but an echoing throb from the strains you are singing,
But long may you sing as the bird sings because of a heart o'erflowing,
And strong may the tones of your lute outring from the depths of a spirit glowing.

O we who have stood in the shadow and looked on the light in its glory,
O we who have suffered alone and in silence, or broken in song the heart story,

We know, do we not, that the bounty of beauty through sorrow is given,
That the most mellifluous measures of music betoken a heart that is riven.
As the swan with the dart at its breast sings bewildering strains in dying,
And the leaves frost-bitten flame forth in glory, their banners of triumph flying,
As the rose exhales its fragrance when its petals are crushed and sundered,
And the laurel perfumes the ax unfeeling that into its core has blundered,

So, when the heart is awearied with the years with their mocking laughter,
And the witches' gaze in the crystal sphere scarce sees what is coming after,
To the Spirit Ineffable turn we, in trust that the cosmos around us
Was builded of beauty forever in widening spheres to enfold us and bound us,
Was builded of love so enduring that the flesh unto ashes returning
Shall leave the soul free on its journey of song through the bright empyrean upyearning.

FATE

SNAPPING and snarling and gnawing insatiate,
Fate is a dog with a bone in its teeth;
Fate is a cat with a quivering mouse
And it tosses its prey in the air for sport:
Lo, I am the bone, and I am the mouse!

Fate is a player of tennis with his racket,
Batting the ball in the game of life,
And I am the ball flying hither and thither;
Fate is a chess-player studying his moves,
And I but a pawn in the game on the board.

At least, such I was till I roused me and rallied
To play in the game with a vim and a will;
To be not the blind sport of Fate the inscrutable,
Not the bone or the mouse or the ball or the pawn,
But the player who matches with Fate, and wins!

THE JOY BRINGER

OUT of the mountains a fay-child came laughing to me,
And the balsam of pines was in her breath, and her hair was free,
Wind-toyed and wild, and her brown eyes looked in mine,
And her berry-red lips quivered with wanton witchery
As she cried: "Behold, I am the joy bringer! I am the joy bringer!

Sound of all sweet bird songs was in her tone,
Field-larks a-fluting out of autumn corn,
Reed-calls of red-wings from the cat-tails blown,
The arabesque of th' robin in the pines at morn,
Were wafted to my heart by the tones of the eerie singer.

The glad surf singing on moon-bright coral shore,
Sound of the wind in the woodland, of the patter of rain on the leaves,
Sound of the purling brooklet, conning its love-dream o'er,

Sound of the spell that the voices of love about me
weaves
Were all in the tones of the fay-child, the joy bringer.

Her elf-eyes sparkled with laughter as she beamed on
me,
And the wild abandon of childhood graced her lithe
limbs in play,
Fay-child, bewildering, winsome, thou holdest my heart
in fee,
Come, take me forth into cloud-land, for I would be up
and away,
Out of the world with thee, my lark, my joy-bringer!

Then she laughed again and faded, like a wraith of mist
in the sun,
I stretched forth my arms to enfold her, but the night-
dew chilled my palm.
O little flower of the fairies, I had nearly plucked you
and won
Out of the night and the tumult the heart's eternal
balm:
Hark, afar, and fainter, the song of my fay-child, the
joy bringer!

But never again for me will the world roll on in its
madness,
In its wild unheedful quest of the bubbles a child may
burst,

For lo, I have laid in my heart the golden promise of gladness,
Have quaffed of the chalice of love, with its quenchless spirit thirst,
Have harked to the song of the fay-child, the joy bringer.

LOVE'S DOWER

IN God's vast universe I stood alone
And watched the stars whirl on their destined way,
Amid the firmament afar they shone
As from my peak I marked them in dismay.

An ant I crawled, so impotent and frail,
'Neath incandescent worlds that swept about,
This flickering candle life, of what avail
With blazing suns on high my hopes to flout?

And then Love came and claimed me in the night,
And lo, I grew until my spirit, fired
By her immortal frenzy of delight,
Unto the splendor of the stars aspired.

Ah Love, we two in harmony create
A universe of beauty and of power
Wrought out of spirit mightier than fate;
My bride hath brought the world to me for dower.

AT THE FERRY

CHIRP out your cries of news, blithe sparrows of the curb,
But not for me,
I read it all in a musty vellum tome:
How this bedevilled wretch blew out the light
Of life's dim candle, and the other
Plucked the ripe fruit his master's sweat had grown;
And yet another wooed and won the wife
His friend had placed upon a pedestal.

Such the world's tidings flung i' th' face of crowds
That press and jostle towards the ferry!
Clang! The gates slam shut,
But still the sombre drove comes surging on.

Be not so eager, tense-faced hurrying host,
Anon the gates will open to receive you all;
Charon, the ferryman, refuses none who come,
Gray-beards and babes alike pass through the open gate.

So ends your feverish day, O city folk who rush
Pell mell adown life's street to catch the outgoing boat.
The night is black upon the bay, and damp

The sea-mist sweeps, enfolding craft and passengers;
But still they come, onrushing like the stream of Fate
Unto the Stygian shore where waits the ferryman.

Ah many and many a time have I been told farewell
By friends, imperious summoned to cross that darksome way,
And I have stood so wistful on the shore
And waved adieu and seen the ferry fade upon the night,
Knowing that never would those dear ones tread with me
Again the old familiar city streets of home.

"Some word, dear heart, O send to me!" I fondly cried,
"Some treasure token from the shadow haunts of sleep,
That I may know you have been safely wafted o'er!"
And then, from out the night, a snowy sea-gull flew
Straight unto me, and at my feet let fall a plume.
I seized it, and thereon in letters as of flame
I read the name of my belovéd passenger.

THE PEOPLE OF THE GRAVES

Part I

WAN is the moon tonight,
And its pallid glinting light,
Filtered thro' the fleeting clouds,
Wavers o'er the silent crowds
Of the city of the dead,
Where, reluctant I am led,
Stumbling o'er forgotten tombs.
Hark, the restless ocean booms
Far on some forbidding shore,
Sobbing with its muffled roar.
What is that? 'Tis but the breeze
Sweeping thro' the cypress trees!
O, that shriek! An owl's cry
Wafted from the troubled sky!
Look! That figure standing lone!
'Tis an angel hewn of stone!
How the wannish moonlight sickens
As the mist about me thickens;
How the leaves are all a-sighing;
There are voices now replying,
Voices of the tolling bells,
Wailing crash amid the dells,
As a funeral train belated

Wends its way to waiting grave.
Heaven's balm I vainly crave!
O my thumping heart, why beat so fast?
Surely a human form went shuddering past!
Hist! that long wail is the cry of the troubled dead!
Look! yonder luminous light! 'twas a ghost that before me sped!
Now from the graves a myriad spectres rise and veer,
See the grim ghastly faces thro' the darkness peer,
See all their phosphorescent fluttering robes so pale,
Flapping in the shouting gale.
Can it be the resurrection night?
O God I quail at the uncanny sight,
At grewsome skeletons in cerements round,
At ghosts or ghouls upstarting from the ground!
Have mercy, save me from th' unhallowed spell,
I reel through darkness down the steeps of Hell.

Part II

Sweet wafted music lulls my soul distraught;
Sealed are mine eyes but peace hath come unsought.
Have they borne me unto the church from the cruel storm?
Again the light, and lo, a radiant form
Beckons me on and upward toward the choir
Singing in rapture jubilantly nigher.
Joyous now the bells are ringing,
Chiming with the choir's singing,

And the organ pipes, a-quiver,
Loud proclaim the blesséd giver
Of light and life and love!
How she waves to me above,
My radiant guide!
Whate'er betide
I will climb aloft where you abide!
But see, the great cathedral arches fade
While my guide smiles undismayed.
Over clouds we wander free,
Treading an aerial sea
Golden lighted like the morn
When the king of light is born.

And about me is a vast processional
Of joyous spirits sweeping up to Mars
Where they dwell,
Or wandering amid the radiant stars;
Lo what are these fairy cities,
With towers and minarets and spires,
With fountains and all the heart desires?
Where mothers sing little lilting ditties
To dancing children and lovers roam
'Mid flower-starred fields in the saffron gloam?
I asked my guide, my radiant one,
Whereat she smiled and put her lily arms
About my neck and kissed me like the sun
Kissing the flowers ere a cloud alarms
These lovers of a wild-wood summer morn,

And cried, " Behold belovéd, now art thou reborn,
No league of darkness clouds the grave for thee,
From all death phantoms is thy spirit free! "

And lo, joy fell upon me like a benediction bright,
For through the Valley of the Shadow unto light
Had I been led
To hold high converse with the dead,
To learn that our belovéd shadow-sisters dwell
In fields Elysian, paved with asphodel,
That only haunters of the earthly plane,
Frail neophytes who grow through sin and pain,
Are chained and clogged with fetters that enmesh;
But patience, brother, soon mayest thou discard the flesh
To soar and sing like mating lark in May.
For every mortal comes a bridal day
When Death is wedded and the singing spheres,
Enfolding with their choir Earth's vale of tears,
Chants to the spirit on its star-strewn path
The rapture of life's radiant aftermath;
Chants of undying love and fadeless youth
And beauty flowering on the tree of Truth.
If this be thy demesne, O Death, I cry to thee:
Praise the deliverer, Lord of Immortality!

YEARNING AFTER THE INFINITE

BUDDHA, Confucius, Christ,
Mahomet and Socrates!
Shall we worship one as a god
And scorn or forget the rest?
Is our skin brown, yellow or white?
Were we born in the East or the West?

Knowest not they are all divine?
Teacher and prophet each?
Be catholic as this great world
With its wealth of life to give
In praise of the living God.

But no one can live or die
That you and I be saved.
No, we ourselves are Fate;
Salvation is ours alone
To wrest from the hand of doom.

When the preacher has had his say
And the zealot has prayed his prayer,
Come out where the stars are strewn
And brood on the beauty of heav'n;
Then go to the world of men
And live and labor and serve.

WAITING

BE still, my heart, and wait
While pulse-throbs thrill in temple and wrist,
For the loved one comes not to her tryst;
Be patient, heart —'tis fate!

Wait as the weary moments pass,
As the sand sifts thro' the mindless glass;
Wait as the bell booms out the hours —
O'er summer skies the storm-cloud lowers!

Wait as the dim ghost days glide past;
Be still, my heart, 'tis life,
And the way of it all is strife,
Till we learn to stifle the pang at last.

Wait as the still moons wax and wane —
Is it meant to be that we wait in vain?
Wait with a stifled cry on the lip
As the years like tears in Time's sea drip.

I have watched the sea's horizon gray —
Be still, my heart, and wait —
But my ship sailed not adown the bay
In thro' the Golden Gate.

Faith has burned to smoke and ashes
  But the Phœnix Hope leaps out of the flame;
  Would that the weary heart might claim
This boon as it heavenward flashes!

But no, we must wait, and forever wait
  Till the heart is still in its last long sleep,
When the soul awakens to meet its fate
  And wends its way through the starry deep.

ON THE DEDICATION OF A DRINKING FOUNTAIN

ALAMEDA, CALIFORNIA

THE skies yielded up their bounty unto the earth;
In the Sierra heights the thunder-cloud gave of its plenty,
And the leaden curtain of the mist of the winter moons
From seaward and the south swept in to drench the valleys;
Yea, the teeming mothers of the heavens gave birth to the rain children,
And the earth was gladdened and sent up pæans of joy.
The grass-blades were the prayers of the grateful land,
And the happy flowers were the hymns of the exultant earth.
Then all the little rillets began to sing songs of praise;
Jubilant canticles of swelling brooks arose from every mountain side,
And the voices of streams all joined in a grand hallelujah chorus,
And the rivers chanted in deep-voiced harmony thanksgiving to the Sender of Rain.

O ye babbling brooks and mellifluous rills,
O ye laughing waterfalls and crystal cascades,

O ye joyous life-giving waters, careering deliriously
downward,
Sing Te Deums triumphal on the awakening of spirit
from earth!

In the mountains loom the titan watchmen pine-trees,
And the vast Sequoias rear their sentinel towers anear
the streams;
In the valley-lands the oaks, benignant guardians,
Spread their gnarled boughs beside the rivers.
There the wild birds come to drink,
And the thirsty bear leads forth her cubs to lap the
tide,
And the native woman, grinding acorns in potholes by
the river,
Scoops up the water in the hollow of her hand to quench
her thirst.

Then, lo, another day, another race, another world!
The white man, he who loves power more than beauty,
The ravager of nature, the destroyer of the forest,
The slayer of all wild things, of trees and flowers and
birds,
Cometh unto the land, and, glorying in his might,
Lays waste all things most fair.
He buildeth cities and the joyous streams he leadeth
into murky sewers,
Yea, the sweet springs he polluteth and hideth beneath
the ground.

Where once were flower-starred banks and sighing trees
He buildeth drear walls and sad unlovely temples.
But the still small voice of the brooklet aye whispers unto him,
And the mute appeals of thirsty brutes still clamor for the life-giving water.
Though the deer and the mountain lion no longer roam abroad,
The helpless beasts by man subdued look up into his face
And silent beg for drink.

Then somewhere in the great cold heart of man
Awakens the spirit of tenderness and compassion,
And the selfish monster arouses out of his lethargy,
And the God-spark kindles love in him,
And he knows that the beast is his brother;
Aye, he knows that there is but one family and one Father,
And he loves the helpless ones and stretches out a hand to them.
Come, come O children, little brothers and great,
Let us drink together, for this is the holy sacrament,
This is the communion service in which we all may join,
This, the life-giving water, O my brothers, little birds and faithful dogs and patient horses,

The same sweet water that quenches your thirst and mine,
Drink of this holy fountain reared in the midst of the sordid city,
Drink that you may be appeased and satisfied,
Drink, for such is the will of God, my brothers,
And he who thinks of the least of the children of the all-merciful Father,
Aye he shall be rewarded with the gift of love from on high,
And the bond of fellowship shall gather him in with its benediction.

THE SECRET OF LIFE

LIGHT dreamings of fancy that waft me afar,
In thy regions romantic, 'mid days that are dead
I linger in gladness and through the cool shadows
That waver so fairly, gaily I roam.

I rove where the passionate flowers are lifting
Slim stems through the covert to look on their God;
I linger in moments of longing and loving
When heart speaks to heart through the beats of a song.

Through heart-beats and song-beats, through pain and
through joy,
Through the longings unsated no words can express,
I found in my dreamings the secret of life,
And lo it was love that I clasped at my heart!

WITH THE DEAD

MOTHER! Is it you, O Mother?
So young, so joyous grown,
You who methought had died
Long years agone! O Mother,
You take me in your arms
As when I was a child,
Mother, O Mother!

I have been ill, so ill,
So racked with pain, dear Mother,
And then I fell asleep
To waken here with you,
To find you watching me
As was your wont of eld,
Mother, my Mother!
How light it seems,
How brightly glows
The diamond sparkling sky!
With rainbow mist
And amethyst
And your smile, Mother mine!

And who comes down
Yon flower-strewn lane?
What maiden blithe
With golden hair,

All robed in white,
With nimbus crowned,
And gleeful child
Sporting about her like a fairy elf?
Nay, speak, O vision!
It cannot be I see aright,
It cannot be this elfin child
Is mine, it cannot be that you
Who left me once to join the dead
Have come to me again! O speak!

The wraith, effulgent opened wide her arms,
And smiled with such a wistful yearning smile,
It seemed an angel out of Paradise
Had come to me and claimed me for her own.
But even as I reached to her embrace
She gravely shook her head and said me nay:
"They need you in the sphere below today,
And I can wait belovéd; I can wait."
Those spirits twain
With th' happy child
Dissolved before my yearning eyes,
The flowers, the light,
All, all grew dim
And I was left in darkness lone.

The doctor with his fingers on my pulse
Spake softly to the nurse: "His breath returns,
He has survived the crisis — all is well!"

THE AWAKENING

STRANGE marvel tales I read as in a trance,
But none so wonder-wrought as this of life,
Beginningless and endless, wherein dance
The puppets we call men, in ceaseless strife
Ascending out of chaos for a day
And melting like the April snow away.

Whence came they and to what far land they fare,
These shadow spectres of a world of dream?
I see them glide along the way of care
To merge to-morrow in oblivion's stream,
These phantoms trailing through the troubled night,
Hallucinations bat-like in their flight.

And all their petty anguish and deceit,
Their wasting love and laughter's transient peal,
Flung at the mocking god's unheeding feet
In vain implored their purpose to reveal,
As souls emerge to flicker in the gloom
Until Death snuffs them out in timeless doom.

But O awake, somnambulist, and see
Behind the pageant of the dreams of fate
The living spirit of eternity

Revealed with power of love to consecrate
This moment where the past and future meet,
The weary farer Life in joy to greet.

The yesterdays, to-morrows, what are they?
To-day sums up the largess of the soul,
And be it clothed in spirit or in clay,
In heaven or earth what matters how time roll
If we but see and know our dreams are true
And God is back of all the things we do!

THE VENUS OF MELOS

SOUL-SICK I fell back in my easy chair;
Dim glowed the fire, my books neglected lay;
'Twas night, so very hushed the scrambling mouse
Affrighted, cowered silent in the walls.

Of what avails this delving after truth,
This tearing out the heart of things to watch
Its beating for the nonce, this eager clutch
At dancing motes that after all are dust?
What, is the worm the master of the feast,
To whose grim jest we each obeisance make?

Thus brooding, down-cast, as my idle glance
Roved o'er the shelvéd tomes, it chanced to fall
On Aphrodite — she in Melos found
Shorn of her arms but still supremely fair —
Pedestaled just before the purple arras;
And, as I looked at her, I mocking cried,
Poor Venus, now indeed art thou disarmed,
Thou hast been treasured past thy Golden Age
That men might scoff at thee, so impotent —
Goddess of Love now turned to bric-a-brac!

But, as I spoke, her sinuous figure stirred,
And from her limbs the careless draperies fell;
Her arms restored, upreached with winsome grace
As lithely from her height she leaped adown,
A quivering goddess, born as from the foam,
Standing in all her beauty at my feet.

Whereat I cried out: "Goddess, Aphrodite!
Can it be true that thou hast come to me
Out of the Golden Age of Greece to bear
Me living witness that thine ancient realm
Of beauty is not whelmed to nothingness?
Can it be true that I indeed behold
The splendor and the majesty sublime
Of human form in all its purity,
Divine embodiment of perfect love?"

And Aphrodite answered me: "Alas
How changed the world, how dulled the heart of man
Since that bright morning-tide of joy and love
When fervid orisons men paid to me.
'Tis not that I am envious of the race
Debased from fealty to beauty's shrine,
But deep I pity their perverted hearts.
Could they but look to me and learn again
The immaterial joys that beauty brings,
Soul joys untainted by the greed of men,
Once more might Naiades breathe pleading strains

Of ravishment on dulcet river reeds
To lure unhappy earthlings unto peace;
Again would every flow'r that breaks the sod
Be bright with eloquence of beauty's fire,
And mortals, peering thro' the forest shade,
Startled, would gaze on Dryads 'mid the trees,
And the forbidden bowers Elysian,
With blithe narcissus, rose and hyacinth
Bespread, would bloom in loveliness again.
Return to beauty, O benighted one,
And open all thy soul to gain its dower
Of joy and rapture. Let thy every sense
Drink to the full this nectar of the gods
Until thy being thrills in harmony
With all the blessed Olympian hierarchy."

I strove to answer her, but, awed to stone,
Transfixed in adoration, silent sat.
Mine eyes were filmed with mist and in a swoon
I sank, while fainter grew the haunting tones
Of Aphrodite, pleading beauty's sway.
Then, from my stupor, sudden roused to life,
I looked and saw the armless statue lorn,
Battered and bruised by scorn of centuries,
But calmly poised as if awaiting there
The Golden Age that would again acclaim
Her sovereign mistress o'er the hearts of men.
And straight I vowed that I would consecrate
My life, a votive offering unto her,

And cry out beauty in the market place,
Till men should pause in their mad rush for gold
And stand transfixed at Aphrodite's shrine
And learn that love and beauty are the law.

THE QUEST OF HAPPINESS

LONG time agone I went a-looking
For the little goddess of Happiness,
And year on year I roamed unceasing
In quest of her, my heart's desire;
Seeking in the high places,
Searching all the low places,
Up and down the world I went
In quest of her, my heart's desire.

To some she seemed to come unsought,
But not to me who longed to find her,
The blessed goddess of Happiness,
So shy, so coy, so hid away
She seemed to flee whene'er I called.
"O wait, O stay, elusive one,"
I cried, but only in reply
I heard the rustle of her wings,
I saw her shadow on the grass,
I caught her laughter from the skies,
And lo, she had eluded me!

Ah, fairy goddess of my desire,
I shall capture you yet, I shall find you and snare you,
Even as Maui, the South Sea god,

Trapped in his net the emerging sun!
You shall be love-captive unto me,
Sunshine goddess of Happiness,
Some day before I yield the quest,
Even as Sir Percival who won the grail
Will I hold you, my holy one!

And so I went forth and ransacked the mountains
To find only Solitude waiting me there
With tears in her eyes, she was so lonely,
And I called beseechingly unto her:
"O fair one whither away has flown
The fairy goddess of Happiness?"
And she answered: "Before you came anear
She was here, in the pine trees
With the chickadees and squirrels,
She was here, in the snow-flakes
That whirl about my summits,
She was here in the glacier streams
That leap and laugh adown my cañons,
But now she has flown as the birds fly away
When the gathering blasts of the winter assail them."

Then I thought, perchance she has fled to the ocean,
And I sailed forth to wander illimitable reaches
With white crests bright glistening
Upon the blue waters where trade winds were blowing,
And southward where tempests
Were howling in darkness,

Down, down o'er the ice-floes
Of wild seas Antarctic.
There too was the sad one, the mistress of sorrow,
The same omnipresent one, Solitude, hovering
O'er cloud-haunted troublous reaches of ocean;
And again I cried unto her, yearning, imploring:
"O fair one, whither away has flown
The little goddess of Happiness?"
And again she replied, as of eld in the mountains:
"She was here, on the wave-crests,
In the arch of the rainbow,
On the back of the albatross
Sweeping and swinging;
She was here with the petrels
Before the storm fleeing,
'Mid the great bergs majestic
Of ice-crags of azure,
But now she has fled as the sun-beams that hide
When the clouds crowd together to darken the day."

So I went unto the city, aye seeking
For the little goddess of Happiness,
And I bethought me, surely she,
Like all the rest, is here for sale,
And I will earn her with a store of gold;
Like all the rest she hath her price.

I wrung the gold from hands unwilling,
I snatched it from my brother's purse,

I plucked it from the sordid poor;
I could not stop at any cost
For I must gain the gold I need
To buy you, little goddess of Happiness.

Anon my coffers were stored with gold,
Gold filched in tolls from rich and poor,
And now, methought, shall I go forth
To buy you, elusive goddess of Happiness.
But when I asked of men the way
To th' market where happiness was sold
They laughed and said the stock was gone,
No more had they at any price.

"Alas," quoth I, "my quest is vain,
I will seek no more to find delight.
My little goddess is but a myth!"
So I gave away my riches,
Cast aside my vain desires
And forgot my futile longings,
When one night, alone, in silence
As I marked the clock's loud ticking,
Spake a soft voice in my ear:
"Dost thou know me not, beloved?
I am the goddess of Happiness
Come to abide with thee now and forever."

LOVE IS ALL

FROM the womb
To the tomb —
This is life, O love!
Panting breath
Unto death
All the strife, O love!

From the light
Into night
Must we go, dear heart;
We but wed
When the dead
We know, and part!

But, ere day
Haste away,
Let us live, O love!
Let us sing,
Let us cling
And forgive, O love!

Should we miss
The fond kiss
Life were vain, dear heart!

Should we yearn,
And yet spurn
Love in Pain, dear heart?

Heed, O heed
This my creed —
Love is all, O life!
Past the grave
It can save,
It can call, O life!

Death is naught
We are taught,
Life is king, dear heart;
But above
Life, is love —
So I sing, dear heart!

THROUGH SORROW'S MIST

DARK and inscrutable the will of Fate,
Deep as the ocean of all human tears,
Since man's first passion woke to haunting fears!
Before its fiat, silent, we await
Our lot of grief or joy, our boon or bane.
God! is Thy gift of love revealed in pain?

Sometimes we strive and win or lose the prize;
Sometimes we trust and toil for goals ahead,
But still the sphinx's riddle runs unread,
And still we gaze beyond with anxious eyes,
Fearing yet hoping that the upturned scroll
May spell its rune of solace to the soul.

The heavy-wingéd hours of leaden pain
Bear me unwilling on across the night,
Voyaging O whither in my fearsome flight?
But all my eager questionings are vain.
Ah when will break the dawn? The cock's shrill cry
Floats mocking up and dies in darksome sky.

The gold we touch, to sordid dust descends;
We clutch at power and totter to the grave;
We turn to Love; ah she can surely save!
Then Atropos with grim shears o'er her bends

And snips the sacred strand, and Love is dead;
Thus shall the Angel Death each mortal wed!

I met a stranger on the King's Highway,
A tattered gray-beard of the elden time,
Who gripped me, walking in my lusty prime,
And with soul-searching voice these words 'gan say:
"O whither goest thou, what radiant bourne
Lures thee, young rover, on thy road forlorn?"

"I am a seeker of the spectral realm
The triune Norns ineffable control —
Truth, Love and Beauty — mistresses of soul,
God-yearning spirits that shall overwhelm
The carnal host in earth-entrammelled halls
Where Greed is potentate and Lust enthralls."

"The realm thou seekest," spake the ancient sage,
"Is girt about with grief and hemmed with pain;
Thy quest shall verily be all in vain
If thou canst not some mortal woe assuage,
Cope with wan Sorrow till thy soul is free —
Master of all the moods of misery."

Ah many a year has lapsed ere I have learned
The lesson conned in coping long with woe,
Learned what in days agone I yearned to know
When on the King's Highway the sage I spurned:
That sorrow's mist veils God's effulgent light,
And they who pierce it see the vision bright.

THE CHILD HEART

THE shy flowers smile in the face of their father,
the bountiful Bright One,
The wild birds chant his praise when he smiles with
the blessing of day;
The child folk follow the wood-things into the wild
with laughter,
And you and I, beloved, shall follow them all away
Into the fields of faery, unto the haunted wood,
And serve them ever with gladness, and learn to be
pure and good.

DREAMING IN THE CROWD

WHAT a world of loneliness
This, the strange forbidding city
Where the hosts of people pass
With never a nod from maid or man,
With never a smile from lass or lad!

Are they real or shadow people
As they pass me in the city?
How they chatter,
How they clatter,
How they bang and clang and scuffle!
But never a word to me is said,
And not a sign or a sound is mine.

O mind them not, these phantom beings,
Heed them not, these walking puppets
(Thus spake a voice to me)
You who have your own companions,
You who roam with crowds about you —
Hosts of memories and fancies,
Throngs of thoughts that live and linger,
Dreams of love and haunting beauty,
Sweet seductive recollections,
Opiate spells o'er idle hours,

Sudden nightmares big with terror,—
All returning, pressing near you
Like a swarm of bees importunate
Buzzing round the empty hive.

Come, O friendly thoughts, we'll wander
Hand in hand amid the meadows,
Golden glades of yester-year;
Hark! the field-larks sweetly gurgle
As within your eyes I peer!
Little children crowd about us,
Tugging with their tiny hands
At the heart-strings, prattling, singing,
Laughing in the misty morn.

And who are you, gnarled hulk of man,
Hobbling along, forlorn and glum,
Amid the ruins o' the City of Doom?
Ah yes, old palsy-stricken derelict,
I know you, Sorrow! You in days agone
Gloated to think you had o'ermastered me;
But now your ashen face and whining voice,
Innocuous, deceives my heart no more;
Pass on, O white-haired renegade of life,
I snap my fingers in your face and laugh;
Slink by, thou vain imposter of the soul,
For I have summoned to my memory feast
More fitting guests, and would not have you near,
Skulking amid the shadows at my door.

Ho, royal comrades, Courage and Good Cheer,
Youths with the tang and zest of life in your veins,
Come, bide with me and keep me company.
We will laugh and sing and frolic,—
Hi you vagabonds of youth,
Crowned like Bacchus with the vine,
Blowing on your pipes of Pan,
You with Naiads for companions,
Dancing Dryades and wood-fauns!
Evoi! Evoi!
O joy, O joy!
Breathe the air of the forest,
Feel the balm of the rain,
Shout and sing in the morning,
Cry God speed to night!

Ah where am I with wander fancies?
Shriek of whistle, wheels a-rumble,
Harsh inharmony of mortals
Where a million counter motives
Urge the frenzied horde to madness.
Come, my love, my Eldinora,
Wild fay of the western mountains,
Take my hand, for I am blinded,
Lead me from the feverish city,
Guide me to your wilding woodland,
Let us foot it to the forest,
Teach me all the lore of love-land,
Let me learn to live in quiet

And forget the restless rabble.
There my hopes and dreams of beauty
I shall gather as a harvest
In the hallowed haunts of spirit.

PRAYER

CRAVING the beatific vision, cried
A sage: "O where 'mid wildernesses wide
Shall God be found to hearken to my prayer?
For I have swept the circumambient air
With mystic glass, star-ranging, plumbed the deep
Where vasty silence in its brooding sweep
Spells habitants of ocean in its thrall;
Peered tiptoe through the leafy-archéd hall
Where Druid oaks their groinéd limbs uplift,
And scaled the granite dome atop the clift,
Aye searching for the Master of the Masque,
The Lord creative at his timeless task.

"But when the mask I lift, there shines no face;
Upon the wheel of time no fingers' grace
Compels the clay to characters of life;
I see but pulsing atoms clash in strife,
Obedient to the urge of mindless law.
And shall I pay my orisons in awe
To this mute force that marks the heaven-wide path
Of blazing suns, or with chaotic wrath
Bursts worlds asunder into meteor dust?
Or shall I kneel before the force august
That gropes to life through chemic changes fine
And flounders upward till it seems divine?"

No answer sighed the unconfiding wind,
No answer roared the inarticulate sea;
No token did the hungering pilgrim find,
No seal of God 'mid earth's mortality.
But when he reached a lorn metropolis
Where men o'er wrought with gold's consuming fire
Made mock of virtue in the marts, where bliss
Evanished in the fever of desire,
He sadly gazed about the multitude,
Pitying the horde that passed him by with rude
Contempt for one from gold emancipate.
He could not leave these earthlings to their fate
But toiled to lead them where in radiant beams
The light of heaven on upturned faces streams,
To lure them forth to look upon the blue
That domes the world with beauty; and there grew
A wonder in his heart as more and more
He searched the human heart's unfathomed store,
More bottomless than ocean, and more vast
Than orbit of the comet sweeping past;
More terrible than black tornado's breath,
More gentle than the calm that follows death.

"Lo I have searched through all insensate things
For token of the Cosmic King of Kings,
But found no sign. Now here in brother man
I see the Master laboring at his plan.
Gold-stifled though it be, the spark divine
Down each soul-vista may be seen to shine,

Lighting the spirit paths to purer spheres.
God! In myself Thy presence vast inheres,
My larger self Thou art, wherein I stand
In glad communion with that laboring band
Of mortals, gross and fine, corrupt and pure,
Creators of the world that shall endure
Beyond the clash of stars, past suns grown cold.
To this one creed in reverent faith I hold,
That at the heart of each blest being lies
God's presence, whispering: "Lagging mortal rise,
In service of thy fellow-creatures strain,
Increase of love shall be thy joyous gain;
Seek for the truth and let it be the light
To beacon thee aye upward toward the right.

"Toil to create that beauty which shall free
Crude earth and flesh from base mortality,
Which shall bring heaven about us from the skies
When God beholds his work through mortal eyes."
This is my prayer: O God within my heart,
Strengthen my will that I may live my part
And be more full of service, thus to do
In deeds of grace my prayer, and prove it true.

FRIENDS

POOR rum-soaked rounder of the tenderloin,
Discarded remnant of the bargain counter,
Give me your hand and talk to me, I pray,
The more you fall, the more you need a friend.

Frail painted plaything of the city streets,
The poison of your kisses burns no more,
The world may shun you as contaminate
But in my heart I find a place for you.

You little nameless playfellow of shame,
The shame and infamy is all the world's;
But, if your father dare not claim his own,
Let me be foster father, friendless waif.

The virtuous may peer through their lorgnettes,
Gather their skirts about them to keep clean,
But what care we? for they, poor things, are starved;
Just throw a kiss to scandal and contempt!

NOW

NOW is the day,
Now is the hour,
Now is the moment
When eternity lies open to thy soul,
When the everlasting moments converge in thee.
Focus them with thy lens of thought
Until the glittering rays of time
Burn like a star of joy in thy firmament.

Not all the golden pomp of yesterdays
Nor all the roseate dreamings of tomorrow —
Vain spectres of past bliss or future hopes —
Can compensate for this, the gift thou holdest.

O thou creator man,
Fashioner of dreams into realities,
Weaver of the warp and weft of thoughts
Into a mantle that shall clothe thy nakedness,
Piler of pyramids upon the base of truth
To heaven pointing,
More lasting than the stones by Cheops reared —
Fashion in beauty,
Build in radiance,
Sing not of time nor of change nor of death,

But let a resounding pæan of the immutable ring out;
Chant in praise of the great world heart,
Heart of thy microcosm,
The essence of all,
This instant,— now!

REMEMBERED LOVE

OLD songs are singing in my brain,
The songs we loved in happy days
That then were bliss but now are pain
Since we are wandering different ways —
Sweet lingering songs that haunt and cling
Close to the heart despite their sting.

For love once known is ne'er forgot,
The old enchanting spell still holds
Despite new life that now enfolds
Our sundered ways; for, plan and plot
Howe'er we may to change our lot,
Remembered love our being molds,
And as we trudge o'er friendless wolds
Still lures us tho' we heed it not.

A NEW YEAR ODE

THE sun aslant the dial falls,
The hours haste the dying year;
And hark! The Destiny that calls:
Awake, O sluggards in your halls,
Shake off your apathy and hear!

Bells through the rain and tempest peal
Their challenge unto thee and me;
Another round of time's swift wheel,
Another chance for woe or weal,
To live the life we know should be.

To cast old creeds to winds of night,
To crush the lusts we cherish still,
To ope heart casements to the light,
To let God's whisper tell the right;
We know the road but lack the will.

We worship power and obey;
In envious strife we strain for gold;
This is the talisman to-day,
For this our very souls we pay —
Behold our masters waxing bold.

The glass is turned, the sand anew
  Sifts down its measured stream of time;
Take heart, for lo, there be a few
Companions, stalwart for the true,
  Who still toward Sinai's summit climb!

Ho bondsmen, break your self-forged chains
  That fetter soul, that cramp the mind;
Count not in gold life's precious gains,
For he who gives himself, attains
  Soul guerdon others ne'er may find.

Then let the New Year bring new hope,
  New life, new light, new love, dear heart.
Closed is the book; another ope
Of larger faith, of broader scope —
  O read therein, and play your part!

THE REINCARNATION OF THE GIANTS

WHAT! Have the giants come to earth again?
Thor and the mighty Heracles reborn?
We name them Steel and Steam, and their great mate
The mailéd hand of Zeus hurled down to man
Out of the thunder-cloud — the protæan Fire!

Hail, heroes by metempsychosis born
To work such deeds of wonder in the world!
We doff our hats to you in silent awe.
Then, as we stand amazed to contemplate
This transmigration of star-wandering souls,
Comes one anigh, more vast incalculably,
In whose bright presence all these haughty ones,
Like worlds dropped in the caldron of the sun,
Melt and are dissipated into mist.
Men call this hero Love, nor seem to know
'Tis God Himself, incarnate in His children.

THE VOYAGE

THIS is the fated day
When we sail on our voyage of adventure;
See, the sailors are weighing anchor,
Singing their rousing chanty,
And the sails are impatiently flapping.
Does your compass point true to the lodestar?
Is the ship's chronometer tested?
Are the log and the quadrant provided?
Have we charts giving reefs, coasts and islands?

O soul, of my life-voyage the master,
Sailing the sea of the future
By breezes of fate wafted onward,
Are you letting my ship drift unheeded,
Or reckoning the way you are steering,
Giving the course to the helmsman?

See! Yonder a storm sweeps upon us,
The sky lowers black and forbidding,
The seas rise and smite us in fury,
And hark! 'tis the roar of the breakers!
Steer, steer for the open, O Helmsman!
Get th' free sweep of ocean before you.
No matter how wild the winds whistle,

No matter how mad the waves buffet,
Stout-hearted, with tones as of thunder
Shout your commands to the sailors,
Keep to your course through the darkness!

And when the dawn of the morrow
Sees the sun rise o'er the wave-crests,
We shall behold to the leeward
A haven of refuge before us,
A mystical isle of the tropics
With glittering peaks unto cloudland
And shimmering verdure alluring.
On into port drifts the frigate,
And hail, lovely harbor of refuge,
For the name of our haven is Death!

A CHANT OF LOVE

I AM America,
Strong in the might of wishing well to all the world!
The blood of every race is in my veins,
My heart beats compassionate to all the nations,
And when they bleed, I bleed — for of their flesh am I.

My every son stands equal here in sight of God,
Of diverse colors and a thousand tongues
Resolved to concord and sweet harmony,
And bound to every shore afar by ties of brotherhood.

My stars and stripes, my flag shall symbolize
Good will to all mankind,
Portent of that enfolding federation of the world
Which like a benediction from my shores shall spread.
Anger shall shake me not though I be wronged afar,
Though frenzied kinsmen, their eyes bleared with th' blood of battles,
Their minds clouded with war's intoxication
Fly in the face of right and smite my children,
Should I too yield to the insane obsession
That the sword can weigh in the scales with righteousness?

I am America!
I dare to keep the peace even though reviled.
I have made a compact with God to conserve my strong young lives,
And will not squander them to vaunt my pride.

Nay, I care not what the world says of me.
I shall make my own fashion,
I shall bide my own time,
Knowing that justice is bred of justice,
Knowing that righteousness will triumph out of its own seed.
Saxon and Teuton, Cossack and Turk —
I am all of these and more;
The north and the south are fused in me
And the east and the west.

I am America!
I am the strong young mother of all men,
My breasts have given suck to them,
They are my children all, and with a mother's love
I ope my arms to them.
Though others chant of hate, I answer them in peace,
I turn the sharp blade of their wrath with my invulnerable armor,
With my chant of love I make reply.

I am America!
The hope of the world am I,
The vestal fire upon my altar shall not die,

And when the nations, prostrate, mired in blood and
the débris of war,
Groaning in anguish, with clenched teeth still, and
clutching guns
Shall cry for mercy and surcease of carnage grim,
I will take them by the hand, for they are flesh of
my flesh,
And we together shall uprear anew
The mighty temple where we worship God,
The temple built of consecrated lives
Uppiled as offerings unto brotherhood.

NEW WORLD MAGIC

NEW world,
New thought,
New day,
I salute you!
Awaked is the sleeper,
Aroused is the dreamer,
Yea, the very dead upstart
And gaze forth in wonder!

Not Merlin the wizard
Could work such enchantments,
Not Faustus, the master,
Such demons exorcised
To answer his bidding!
Old Proteus elusive
Such changes erratic
In wildest delirium
Never embodied.

Invisible waves through the æther are wafted,
Invisible thrilling of wires that tingle
With sound and with power to whirl us onspeeding;
Speech tossed o'er abysses of silence are captured,
Sounds stored are at will recreated in wonder!

A touch, and the night is a-sparkle with starlight,—
Aladdin ne'er wrought such audacious conjurings.

O what is the meaning
Of such necromancy,
When Science, magician,
Cries abracadabra,
And genii upstarting
Obediently serve him.
Nay, this is no magic,
No miracle working,
No alchemist's fancies,
But reason triumphant,
Converting the formless
To order and meaning,—
Mind wrestling with chaos,
Soul striving with nature,
Man vying with God!

But what reck we of the glory of engines?
We cry for man's glory and the glory of the Lord.
Aye, the world is but clay to be shaped unto beauty,
And the stars in the vast are but candles on the altar.
From the first to the last in the earth and the heavens
One miracle only can thrill with its wonder,—
When God breathes on atoms and lo they are life,
When Man breaks from matter and lo he is love!

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